

# Sandomierz

the Architectural Pearl of the Region



## Sandomierz

Sandomierz is a town on a high bank of the Vistula River located among picturesque Loess hills and ravines. Its history is very interesting and there are many very valuable monuments. Since 1138 it was the capital of the Sandomierskie principedom. Sandomierz was given its town rights in 1286. Its medieval urban arrangement is well preserved and regarded as a precious relic. It is not possible to depict all the valued monuments of Sandomierz in a short description. In the past Sandomierz was surrounded by resistance wall with four gates: Lubelska, Krakowska, Zawichojska and Opatowska. Only the last one has been preserved till now. It was built in the late 14th century.

In the 16th century the gate was elevated and crowned with Renaissance wall. At the top of the gate there is a vantage point from which there is a great panorama over Sandomierz and its surroundings. Nearly in the centre of the old town there is a market among historical tenement-houses. In the middle of the market there is a Town Hall erected in the late 14th century. It is a one-story brick building with a high decorative wall on the edge of the roof. At present the Town Hall houses a branch of a Regional Museum. In the ground floor of the building there is an exit from an underground tourist route. The dungeons in Sandomierz have been famous for centuries. They were dug up probably in the 14th century as depository. Near the market there is a cathedral built in 1360 by Kazimierz Wielki in place of a Roman church. It was often expanded until it got Baroque west exterior in the late 17th century and Baroque interior in the beginning of the next century. The cathedral in Sandomierz is a Gothic building. In the chancel the walls are decorated with Byzantium-Russian pictures, one of the four of this kind preserved in Poland. Near the cathedral there is a castle built by Kazimierz Wielki in place of a ducal one. The building used to be connected with the town resistance system. In 1656 the still not finished castle was blown up by







the Swedes. After the restoration, in 1817 the castle was turned into a prison. In 1959 the prison was closed and the building underwent research and thorough repairs when Gothic walls were uncovered under the plaster. At present there is the Regional Museum. There is a presentation of the Sandomierz region history and an exhibition devoted to Jarosław Iwaszkiewicz.

On top of a high slope there are white walls of Collegium Gostomianum crowned with late Renaissance decorative wall. It is a part of one of the oldest school buildings in Poland – a jesuitic high school founded in 1602. A little further from the centre of the town there is St. Jacob church and the Dominican monastery, the oldest and the most valuable relic in Sandomierz. Its architecture is late Renaissance with early Gothic parts. As one of the first in Poland it was built in brick with many brick decorations. Next, there is a Gothic St. Paul church built between 1426 and 1434. Near the church there is the beginning of queen Jadwiga ravine. Its steep slopes are up to 10 meters high. The slopes of the gorge, which is about 500 meters long, are overgrown with trees and bushes with the protected Dwarf Cherry. To the east of the centre of the town, there are the Pieprzowe Mountains which run along the steep bank of the Vistula River, and which are the east end of the Świętokrzyskie Mountains. The mountains are made of Cambrian grey slate and they are regarded as a nature sanctuary where many rare and interesting plants find their asylum. The Pieprzowe Mountains are the biggest concentration of wild roses in Poland.

**The official website of Sandomierz**  
[www.sandomierz.pl](http://www.sandomierz.pl)

**Regional Museum**  
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